



Fall Newsletter 2017

The Volley for Life at SLM

"I'm conflicted," admitted the boyfriend. He referred to the life of his baby - the child in utero whose survival balanced between pros and cons.

His moral compass spoke first. "I'm **not** for abortion!" Then he later added, "But sometimes it is **necessary**..."

"I'm not ready to have a child," the girlfriend demurred. "I'm **scared**."

Ultimately, "**necessary**" won the volley. Eight weeks would pass, and Asa visited the center again, her womb now emptied from the abortion procedure.

Asa was raised Muslim and her God did not forgive so easily. She felt trapped inside her sadness. Anger also emerged and targeted the boyfriend who had not encouraged the pregnancy.

Feeling desperate, she responded to the invitation to attend the center's post-abortion Bible study. Here she heard assurance of a God who loved her unconditionally. The counselor sensed a growing reverence for Him as the discussion deepened. Asa's spirit was opening to the Gospel.

"Forgiveness and eternal life are not based upon what you have done, but what God has done for us." Soon the counselor gently asked Asa if she desired Jesus' free gift of salvation. Asa was already responding before the counselor even finished asking...her head vigorously nodding '**Yes!**'

In that moment, the burden of sin was lifted and by her newfound faith, life was forever **renewed**.



The #LifeFirst Campaign

Throughout October, the #LifeFirst Campaign is raising funds to augment Sanctity of Life Ministries' online marketing, so that we can reach more people in need.

Our online visibility is crucial - we want our potential clients to find compassionate care and life first! But with increased online competition, we've seen a marked decrease in client calls recently. We're competing against many for-profit companies with large advertising budgets, just to get our name out there for women seeking help with unplanned pregnancies.

Will you join us in the #LifeFirst Campaign, so abortion-vulnerable women in our area can find our centers first online?

[Visit the #LifeFirst page](#)

[Donate to #LifeFirst](#)

CEO Corner



Romans 12:2 "*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*"

As we lift up the mission of SLM every day, we seek transformation - that God will do a work of renewal in each of our lives through the Holy Spirit so that we can be conduits of renewal and restoration in the lives of our clients and our mission of ***Life in Christ...Life in the Womb***. I am reminded every day that God wants to change us to be in deeper relationship with Him so that **we** grow deeper in our personal relationship with Him, but also extend that transformation to those we assist at our centers.

As we have listened to the needs of our clients, we have responded with new programs to enhance transformation. Hosting in-services that provide continuing education for our staff and volunteers, attending the Care Net Conference in Washington, D.C. in August and adding an Embrace Grace program at one of our centers have infused new energy and provided new, excellent resources and stronger support for our clients. Adapting our counselor training with new curriculum to better connect with our clients and offering more curriculum options for our Earn While You Learn parenting programs are other ways in which we have been changing to better serve our Northern Virginia community of clients.

Thank you, partners of SLM, for making our mission possible! It is because of your faithful and generous support that we are able to carry out and expand the mission of ***Life in Christ...Life in the Womb***.

Building Hope, Faith and Confidence through *Embrace Grace*

Every day we come to SLM to serve we know we are part of something bigger—we are part of the pro abundant life movement! Why? Because we know we are God's image-bearers, created with the purpose of glorifying Him and leaving the world a better place. We're constantly working to ensure our clients feel supported and ready for next steps. However, many of our clients were saying yes to life, but still felt overwhelmed. They needed someone to help them build confidence in their decision, before they could be ready to start making strides in other programs like Earn While You Learn.

Then we learned about the ministry *Embrace Grace*. Their mission is to be pro-mom, pro-baby—pro-love! Their vision is churches coming alongside women who choose life for their babies—either to parent or carry them through adoption—and being the hands and feet of Christ to them. The curriculum they developed helps girls meet or strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ and deal with the baggage of their lives so they can build more confidence. They prepare to be the best mom they can be.

A local church sponsored our first group, and we were up and running to start Embrace Grace, with weekly meetings at our Fairfax Center. Our first group was blessed with two young women. This semester we have **eight**. What a joy and blessing it has been to watch these women grow in their love for the Lord! It's a privilege to watch them learn about God and how much He loves them. It's an honor to cry and pray with them as they look to the past, then move forward with renewed confidence and ability for parenting. It's a blessing to both the participants and the facilitators to observe these young women building new friendships with one another. It's an added delight to see many of them turn their increase in confidence through Embrace Grace into energy to develop practical homemaking and parenting skills. More than half of our group of eight has enrolled in our Earn While You Learn classes after spending a few weeks in Embrace Grace.

At the end of the study sessions, we host a baby shower for our Embrace Grace clients. Women from a partner church and the participants' friends come together to bless them with things they need for their babies and share in a lot of fun together. We invite them to become part of the partner church family or help them find a church home in the community where they can continue to grow. Through Embrace Grace, we have seen amazing grace in action, and it has been an incredible blessing.

Care Net 2017 Conference



On the morning of August 30th, five members of our staff team were on their way into D.C. for the 2017 Care Net Conference. Care Net, with which we are affiliated, is a national organization that supports one of the largest networks of pregnancy centers in North America. We were excited to hear inspirational and educational speakers and learn from people from across the country who shared our passion for helping women in crisis pregnancies. Each morning began with a time of worship and devotions. For the next three days, we then attended workshops related to our roles in the ministry, on topics such as Client Care, Development, Outreach

and Marketing. Energized by testimonies and wisdom of others who had gone before us, we learned so much! We look forward to implementing all that we learned through updating our processes, and continuing to serve our ministry to the best of our God-given abilities!

Calendar: Upcoming Events

October 23 - 26: Volunteer Appreciation Week

October 25: Counselor Training Weekly Sessions Begin

November 16: Evangelism In-Service

December 22 - January 1: Christmas Holiday for both centers

January 21, 2018: Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

April 6, 2018: SLM Annual Fellowship Dinner

Continuing Our Education: Staff & Volunteer In-Services

Tuesday, Sept. 26th (Alexandria) & Wednesday, Oct. 11: Safety In-Service

Our staff & several volunteers heard from Fairfax County Police Officer Urps and Fairfax City Police Officer Wayne on workplace safety and best practices to keep our staff, volunteers and clients at our centers safe.

Monday, Oct. 16th: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault In-Service

Angie Acosta from Fairfax County's Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services came to speak with us on what domestic and sexual violence may look like, and how we can best help our clients if they face these circumstances. We received excellent information as to all the expanded county resources available to provide multiple options for help, facilitated through a 24-hour hotline.

Coming Soon: Thursday, Nov. 16: Evangelism In-Service

We're excited to hear from Randy Newman, author and speaker, on the topic of evangelism, specifically concerning how we can best continue to share the Gospel with our clients. Randy is an author of several books, a senior fellow of Evangelism & Apologetics with the C.S. Lewis Institute, and is the leader of a teaching ministry, Connection Points. Randy also has 30 years of experience in ministry with Campus Crusade. We're looking forward to it!

Save the Date: SLM 2018 Fellowship Dinner!



Mark your calendars: the **2018 SLM Fellowship Dinner** will be held at the Fairview Park Marriott on **Friday, April 6, 2018**. We're looking forward to seeing you there!

We are very excited to announce our **Keynote Speaker, Melissa Ohden!** Melissa is the survivor of a saline infusion abortion attempt in 1977. Despite concerns for Melissa's chances for surviving past infancy and living a 'normal' life, she was adopted as a baby by a family in the Midwest, and God continued to write her story. Today, Melissa shares her story of abortion survival, her adoption, her search for her biological family, and how God has brought her life full circle.

Welcome to Marni & Amy!

We would love to officially welcome our two new nurses, **Marni Plaster and Amy Drinkwater!** Both recently passed their sonography training with flying colors - congrats, ladies!

Marni (right in photo) is a registered nurse who previously worked as a pre-op nurse at Inova Surgery Center in Springfield and Lorton. While attending the 2017 Fellowship Dinner, Marni felt the call to respond to our request for any nurses in the audience who might feel called to pursue nurse sonography at SLM - and just like that, our prayer was answered! She has hit the ground running, spending the majority of her time at our Alexandria center.

Amy (left in photo) is a registered nurse with experience in medical-surgical nursing, intensive care and nursing home care. Previously a U.S. Naval Officer with the nurse corps, she served in Okinawa, Japan and San Diego, California in addition to the Northern Virginia area. She has a passion for the medical mission of SLM, and like Marni, has shown tremendous acumen in her scanning ability. She will be spending the majority of her time at our Fairfax Center.

A special thanks as well to our Nurse Manager, Michelle Franklin! Michelle (center in photo) has been an incredible rock in this time of transition, and has faithfully committed many extra hours to covering ultrasound appointments in both locations and in facilitating Marni and Amy's sonography training.



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